



How to do business with us

September 2021

About this guide

This guide has been developed to assist Suppliers wishing to sell their goods and services to the Council.

01. Introduction

Epsom & Ewell Borough Council spends approximately £14.5m each year on a range of goods, works and services.

The aim of this guide is to provide key information on how the Council makes purchases and help suppliers understand how to secure contracts with the Council by:

- Outlining the rules that the Council must follow
- How and where tender opportunities are advertised
- The Council's expectations of its Suppliers.

02. Contract Standing Orders

The Council's Contract Standing Orders ('CSO's) set out how the Council manages its spending and relates to all goods, works and services. They ensure that prior to any expenditure Officers give proper consideration as to whether the purchase is required, and that Contracts are entered into in a fair, open and transparent way. They also set out the procedures for advertising, evaluating and letting contracts of different values and form part of the Council's constitution.

A copy of the Council's CSO's can be found here:

<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/business/procurement-epsom-and-ewell-borough-council>

03. UK and European Statutory Procurement Regulations

As a public body, Epsom & Ewell Borough Council is subject to the Procurement Regulations. The Council is required to advertise all contracts above the set thresholds for goods, works and services. These high value contracts are advertised on Find a Tender (FTS). All contracts advertised through the FTS follow a strict set of rules set out in the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

Furthermore, any contract over the value of £25,000 must be advertised on Contracts Finder. The threshold is based on the total aggregate value of a contract. For example a 4-year contract with an annual value of £45,000, the total contract value (TCV) would be £180,000 and would need to be advertised with both FTS and Contracts Finder.

04. Threshold

The current Procurement Thresholds set on 1st January 2020 are:

Goods and Services	Works
£189,330	£4,733,252

How the Council Tenders

The value of the contract will determine which procedure the Council must follow:

Threshold 1: Quick Quote (QQ)

Procurement route for low value purchases up to £10,000
Up to three quotes with a minimum 14 working days for quotation
Quotation requests via email

Threshold 2: Request for Quotation (RFQ)

Procurement route for purchases between £10,001 and £25,000 tender threshold.
Three quotes with a minimum 21 working days for quotation
Quotation requests via In-Tend

Threshold 3: Under threshold, Invitation To Tender (ITT)

Procurement route for purchases between £25,001 and £188,999 tender threshold.
Minimum of three and maximum of 5 quotes with a minimum 28 working days for quotation
Bids received via In-Tend
Advertised on Contract Finder and FTS

Threshold 4: Over threshold, Invitation To Tender (ITT)

Procurement route for purchases over £189,000
Open / Restricted tender opportunity with timescales set by Contract Regulations (PCR's)
Bids received via In-Tend
Advertised on Contract Finder and FTS

E Procurement

From 2018, all communication within public procurement processes must be fully electronic. This encompasses everything from how bids must be submitted to raising and responding to clarifications.

The Council uses the e-tendering system In-Tend. The e-procurement system automates the procurement process with an end-to-end tool, which is used from issuing the initial advertisement to contract award. Suppliers can register and submit their interest free and are notified of new opportunities.

In addition to our e-tendering solution, other e-procurement initiatives undertaken by the Council include:

- Electronic invoice processing.
- Electronic distribution of orders (via e-mail)
- Payment of supplier invoices exclusively by BACS.

Purchase Orders

Official orders issued by the Council should include an order number. It is important that when suppliers invoice they include the Purchase Order number on their invoices.

Payment information

The Councils policy for the payment of invoices is to pay invoices promptly in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Government. Payment will normally be within 30 days unless there is a query on the invoice.

Suppliers should ensure that invoice details are correct and issued according to the terms of any agreement in place.

Policies

Equalities and diversity:

The Council positively welcomes and aims to support the growing diversity of the community we serve and the people we employ. A workforce that reflects the diversity of society commits the Council to providing services to our many different communities.

Link: <https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/residents/communities-wellbeing/equality-diversity>

Sustainable Procurement:

Sustainable procurement, in simple terms, is the process by which the Council meets its purchasing needs in a way that achieves value for money whilst benefitting the suppliers, its customers, the wider society and economy whilst protecting the environment.

The Council seeks to address the environmental impact of its activities and Suppliers will be asked (for Procurements within Threshold 3 and 4) to demonstrate their awareness of relevant environmental issues through their own policies.

Social Value Act:

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 places a requirement on Officers who purchase on the Councils behalf to consider securing added economic, social or environmental benefits for their local area. The Act currently applies only to goods and supplies contracts over the EU threshold (£189k) but shall be considered in all procurements where applicable. SV forms part of a bidders commitments at tender stage and should be tailored to the subject nature of the contract being awarded.

Modern Slavery

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is a UK act of Parliament designed to tackle slavery and human trafficking through the consolidation of previous legislation and the introduction of new measures. Specifically it introduces new requirements for suppliers in regards to their business and supply chains. The Council is not in-scope for the purpose of the Act however, Council Officers should ensure that Council-appointed suppliers do not participate in modern slavery, either directly or within their supply chains.

Useful Links

The following sites are useful links for receiving information on current contract opportunities.

In-Tend Supplier Portal- Suppliers have free access to the Portal to view upcoming procurement opportunities. The portal also acts as the front end for the e-tendering solution

Website: <https://in-tendhost.co.uk/epsom-ewell/asp/Home>

Find a Tender Service (FTS) - Use the Find a Tender service to search and apply for high value contracts (usually above £118,000) in the UK's public and utilities sectors.

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/find-tender>

Contracts finder - This is a free service which enables businesses to find opportunities to supply goods and services to the public sector

Website: <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

Useful Contacts

For further advice on Procurement and tendering please, contact the Procurement Officer.

Email: procurement@epsom-ewell.gov.uk